

THE
WAY of GOD
WITH HIS
PEOPLE
IN THESE
NATIONS.

Opened in

A Thanksgiving Sermon, preached
on the 5th of *November*, 1656. be-
fore the Right Honorable, the
High Court of Parliament.

By PETER STERRY.

L O N D O N :

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FOR THE
RIGHT HONORABLE,
The High Court of Parliament;
The Epistle Dedicatory.

Right Honorable,

I Have obeyed your Commands in Printing this Sermon, as I did in Preaching it. O that in both, the Sermon may prove an Alabaster Box, and the Name of Jesus Christ, as an Oyntment powdered forth from it! We are in a Wilderness. Clouds of Darknes, and Doubt; Fires of Danger, Dissention, and Wrath, are in the midst of us, round about us. That the Presence of, Christ may be the Pillar of a Cloud, and of Fire, to go before you as a Light in Difficulties, to stand behind you as a Defence in Dangers, is the continual Prayer of

Your Honors most
humble Servant in Christ,

PETER STERRY.

Fryday, the 7th of Novemb. 1656.

ORdered by the Parliament, That
Mr. *Sterry* have the Thanks of this
House for his great Pains taken in his Ser-
mon preached before this House, at *Margarets, Westminster*, on the 5th of *Novemb.*
Being a day set apart for Publick Thank-
giving ; and that he be desired to Print
his Sermon ; and that he have the like
Priviledg in Printing, as hath been for-
merly allowed to others in like Cases.

And that Col. *John Fones* do give him
the Thanks of this House accordingly.

Henry Scobell, Clerk
of the *Parliament*.

A S E R M O N preached before the Right
Honorable House of Parliament, on
the 5. of November, 1656. Being a
Thanksgiving Day for the Victory over
the Spaniards West-Indie Fleet.

Isaiah, 9. 5.

*For every battel of the warriour is with confused
noise and Garments rolled in Blood; but this shall
be with burning, and Fuel of fire.*

T His verse is a Prophecy of the deliverance
of Jerusalem from the siege by Sennacherib;
of which you have the compleat History
afterwards in this Book: Chap. 36.
Chap. 37.

In the first verse of this Chapter, men-
tion is made of two dark seasons, which afflicted the King-
dom of Israel. One was, when Tiglath Pileser invaded
part of the Land, and carryed part of the people into
C Captivity;

Captivity; of which you may read, *2. Kings, 15. 29.* The other was, when *Salmanaser* over-run the whol Land, carryed captive the generality of the people, and set an end to that Kingdom. The Lord comforteth his people of the Kingdom of *Judah*, that the trouble, which was to come upon them by *Sennacherib*, should not be so grievous, as either of these. For saith he; *Nevertheless the darkness shall not be such, as was in her vexation; when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and the Land of Naphtali, and afterwards did more grievously afflict her by the way of the Sea, Jordan in Galilee of the Nations.*

The second verse is a great Promise of Deliverance. The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light: they that dwel in the Land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. The Prophet speaks of al the Jews in both Kingdoms, as one Body. When the Kingdome of *Israel* was laid wast, it is probable, that many of those ten Tribes fled into the land of *Judah*. When *Sennacherib* invaded *Judah*, ruining the Countreys, as he passed, with his army; the multitude of the people retyred before him into *Jerusalem*. The King of *Assyria* besiegeth that great City, and with his mighty Army over shadows it, as with *Darkness*, and the shadow of Death. Now in the thickness of this darkness a light ariseth, and shines forth upon the people by the prayer of *Hezekiah*, the prophecy of *Esaiah*, the descent of the Lord from Heaven by a mighty Angel.

Behold the difference, which God makes between the Kingdom of *Israel*, and of *Judah*; those, who set up Calves to themselves, who worship the maker of Heaven, and Earth, after the Imaginations of their own heart, in the Images, and works of their own hands: and

and those, who worship him in his own Temple at *Jerusalem*, which is a figure of *Jesus Christ*, the only Image of the Invisible God, as he makes himself known to us by his own Spirit.

You have three senses of the first part of the 3. verse, *Thou hast multiplied the Nation, and hast not increased the joy*: Some apply this to *Sennacheribs Army*, which was so numerous, and a Collection of so many Nations. The Heathen were gathered together against *Jerusalem* in vast numbers: but they had no joy in it, proportionable to their Combinations, and their Confidence. Others interpret it of the *Jews* shut up in *Jerusalem*, during the siege. You may read the words, as the Margin points it out to you; in stead of; *Thou hast not increased the joy; thou hast increased the joy to him*; that is to *Hezekiah*, who was then King of *Judah*; as if he should say; *Thou hast by occasion of this siege multiplied the people round about Hezekiah in Jerusalem, and now in the Eyes of them al thou settest him up on high, and increasest his joy, by that Miracle, which thou workest to deliver them for his sake.* Or else, there is a sweet *Antithesis*, or *Opposition* in the words. On *Sennacheribs* part thou multipliest the Nation, his Army, and outward strengths: but thou increasest the joy to *Hezekiah*. They joy before thee according to the joy of harvest, and as men rejoyce, when they divide the Spoile. This was the joy of the people of God, when they came forth from the City, and found the dead bodys of their enemies lying in the fields, like Corn newly cut down, and their treasures, like full Ears of Corn.

We may observe two things from this verse.

First, The end of affliction frequently is to gather up beleevvers close to *Jesus Christ* in his own person, or in the Anoyntings of his Spirit upon some chosen ones; that

he may increase the honor, and joy of these in the fight of al the people, by that Salvation, which he works thorow them, and for their sakes.

Secondly, The joy of the Saints in their deliverances is a *Double* joy; a *Harvest* of spiritual glories, and consolations in the appearances of God to them: the *spoil* of the enemy, whose Power, and wealth becomes theirs, while they are cut off by the appearances of God for his beloved. Thus *Jesus Christ* at the same time ascended into Heaven to the Father, and spoyled the powers, and Principalities of this world, carrying Captivity Captive. Thus our Savior tels the Saints, that what ever they lose, that is dear to them in this world, they shal have it again *an hundred-fold, and everlasting Life*. There is the harvest of Spiritual joyes, *everlasting Life*. There is the spoil of the enemy, and Captivity Captivated, when they recover al the Beautys, joyes, sweetneses of this world out of the hand of the enemy, and have them *an hundred-fold*; by *possessing* al, even that, which was the enemies too; by *having* al after a loss, a fight, by a victory; having al natural joyes heighthned by their Vnion with spiritual enjoyments.

The deliverance of *Jerusalem* from *Sennacherib* is set out in verse, 4. by a comparison with the destruction of *Midian*. *Thou hast broken the yoke of his burthen, and the staff of his Shoulder and the rod of his oppressour, as in the day of Midian*. You may see the story of *Midian* in the seventh Chapter of *Judges*. It was wholly miraculous, and had these Extraordinary things in it. First, God divided *Gideon's* Army from him by one Division upon another, until he had lessened it from *thirty thousand*, to *three hundred*; verſ. 3, 6, 7. Secondly, The terror upon the spirit of the *Midianites*, and courage infused into *Gideon* by a dream;

dream; verse, 13, 14, 15. Thirdly, The manner of the victory on *Gideon's* part, who with his men stood still, breaking their pitchers, holding forth their Lamps, blowing with their Trumpets, crying; *The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon*; which were all signs of faith, and Prayer, of the vertue of the Death, Resurrection, Glory, and Spirit of the Lord Jesus in the Gospel: verse, 20 21. Fourthly, the destruction of the *Midianites* one by another before that *Gideon*, or his men strik one strok. The overthrow of *Sennacherib*, and his Army holds a resemblance with that of *Midian*; in general, in the miraculousness of it; in particulars; First, Al the land of *Judah* was over-run, and only *Jerusalem* left, where also was, as commentatours tel us from the Scripture, a powerful, & numerous party divided from *Hezekiah* in a conspiracy to deliver up the City to *Sennacherib*. Secondly, *Hezekiah's* mourning, and Humiliation was the breaking of the Pitcher; *Esaiah's* prophecy, and message to him upon it, which was full of spirituality, of Evangelicalness, of triumph, which was, as the *Lamps* shining forth upon the breaking of the pitcher; the Comming down of the Angel, by which the Army perished, , was the sounding of the Trumpet, and the cry of the Sword of the Lord. Thirdly, The Army was overthrown without a fight. Fourthly *Sennacherib* was slaine by his own Sons, as the *Midianites* set every man his Sword against his fellow.

In the 9. verse, the Reason of this wonderful Salvation is given: *For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given &c.* This in the letter is expounded of *Hezekiah*, as he was a figure of *Christ*. But the *Jews* themselves acknowledg this whol Scripture to have a more sublime sense, and to relate to the *Messiah*, which is Jesus Christ. We may learn this from it.

First,

First, That al the eminent works, and wonders of God in the world, by which he saves his people, or executes vengeance on his enemies, are *figures*, and *forerunners* of the Day of *Christ*.

Secondly, Some new birth and bringing forth of *Christ* into the world in his own *Person*, or in his *spirit*, or in some eminent *Type*, or *Saint*, or *Dispensation*, is the ground, on which God builds his works of wonder in the world for the good of his Church, or the Ruin of wicked men, and powers.

Having thus levelled the ground round about my *Text*, I come to my *Text* it self, which compares the destruction of *Sennacherib* before *Jerusalem* with al warres by way of transcendency. *For every battel of the warrior is with confused noyse, and garments rolled in Blood: but this shal be with fire, and burning of Fuel.* The difference between every battail, and this slaughter of the *Affyrians* is three fold: First, There are warriors on both sides: here *Fire*, and *Fuel* meet. Secondly, There is a confused cry: here al is in silence. Thirdly, There is a plentiful effusion of blood: Here no blood is shed. An Angel went forth, and smote of the *Affyrians* in one night one hundred, fourscore, and five thousand: *Esa. 37. 36.*

It is frequent in Scripture to set forth the Miraculous Appearances, and Works of invisible Powers, either of God, or of the *Angels*, or of the *Holy Ghost*, by *Fire*, both to the Ear, and to the Eye. A Pillar of Fire led the Children of *Israel* through the Wilderness; Horses of fire, and Chariots of fire, carried up *Elijah* into Heaven, and encompassed the Servant of *Elisbah*, when he was afraid of an Army of Enemies; the *Holy Ghost* descended

in

in the form of fiery Tongues upon the *Apostles*. The Lord promiseth by the Prophet *Esaiah*, to be a wall of *Fire* round about his People. And *John* the *Baptist* tells us in the Gospel of *St. Matthew*, that *Jesus Christ* shall Baptize his People with the *Holy Ghost*, and with *Fire*.

Fire is the most potent, and glorious of all the Elements. Some say, that the *Sun*, the chief, and the Golden Head of this visible World, is the Element of *Fire*; and that *Fire* shall at last convert all the other Elements into it self, and so give them their Perfection. *Fire* is Burning, and consuming only on *Earth*, where it is straitened, and meets with resistance. But in *Heaven* it is only vital, transparent, shining, cheering, incorruptible. In all these respects, how proper is it to represent the Miraculous descents of God from above upon the *Earth*, as he shines forth upon his Church, or flames forth upon the world, by *Fire*.

The Doctrine which I shall observe to you from these words, and insist upon, is this:

DOCT.

God makes it his Delight, and Praise, to go, New, and Extraordinary waies with his Church, and with the World for his Churches sake.

I wil give you Two Arguments, for the cleering, and proving of the Point: One from *Christ*: The other from the *Spirit*.

Arg. I.

The First Argument is taken from *Christ*. The way of God with his Church, and with the World, in order to the Church, is in *Christ*. I intreat you for the fuller understanding of this, and

and how it makes to the Point in hand, to lay three Scriptures together. *Ephes. 3. 8, 9, 10. Matth. 28. 8. Ephes. 1. 20.*

Ephes. 3. 8. You read in the latter end of the verse, of the *unsearchable Riches of Christ*. Two things go to make up *Riches*: *Preciousness*, and *Plenty*. The things of *Christ* are *Rarities*, *Precious* things; such, as are no where to be found in the Creature. They are the *Things of God*, the *Righteousness of God*, the *Wisdom of God*, the *Power*, the *Peace*, the *Grace*, the *Glory of God*. Now *Jesus Christ* hath *Plenty* of these *Precious* things, and this makes him *Rich*. But the *Holy Ghost* thinks not that word of *Riches* enough to express the *Excellency*, and *Fulness of Christ*. Therefore he adds to *Riches*, *Unsearchableness*, and calls them the *Unsearchable Riches of Christ*. *Unsearchableness*, respects the *Nature*, or *Number* of things. The *Excellencies of Christ* are both waies *Unsearchable*. Every thing of *Christ* is *Unvaluable*: and those *Unvaluable* things in Him, are *Innumerable*. They are past our *Understanding*. We cannot comprehend the *Excellency*, nor count the *Number* of them. They swallow us up, and lose us in *Admiration*.

At Verse 9. *St. Paul* goes onto shew, That the *Mystery* of these *Riches*, in which all *Saints*, and *Holy Spirits* have an immortal Fellowship one with another, as in a retired *Paradise*, is that secret *Wheel*, hidden in *God*, on which the whole *Creation* is turned from the beginning to the End: And to make all men see, what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world is hidden in *God*, who created all things by *Jesus Christ*.

Verse, 10. We are taught, that the intent of *God* in the *Riches of Christ* is, that the *Angels* themselves, who rule the whole world, as the *Heads* of all *Created Beings*,
power.

Power, and Operations, even the highest of them, and that in the midst of their Heaveuly Glories, should have new Discoveries of the Wisdom of God, in the variety of its Wayes, and Contrivances by the workings of God, according to *Christ* in the Church, and from the Church upon the World: To the intent, That now unto the Principalities, and Powers in Heavenly places may be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God: verse 11. According to the Eternal purpose, which he purposed in *Christ Jesus* our Lord. The only Rule and Line, by which God walks and works, is the eternal Draught or Platform in the Person of *Christ*.

Let us now lay to this Scripture, that of *Matt. 28. 18.* *All Power is given unto me in Heaven and Earth.* They are the words of our *Savior*, being risen from the dead. The word *Power*, as it is in the *Greek*, signifieth *Eminency, Authority, Magistracy, Rule.* *Heaven and Earth* have *Four Senses*, which are all intended here. First, These *Heavens and Earth*, which we see with our Eyes. Secondly, Things *Visible and Invisible.* Thirdly, *Grace, and Nature*; or the things of *God*, and of the *Creature.* Fourthly, The *Church and Common-wealth*; *Civil, and Religious Affairs*, if this be a distinct Sense from that before it. You see by this Scripture, what use *Jesus Christ* hath for those *Unsearchable Riches* mentioned in the former Scripture, and to what employment he puts them; even to rule *All* in *Heaven*, and in *Earth*; among *Spirits, Angels, and Men*; in *Grace, and Nature*; in *Church, and Common-wealth.*

I intreat you now to make a stand for a little while, and to look back upon the joynt sense of these two Scriptures; the *Riches*, and the *Rule of Christ*; that we may see how they make for our present purpose, for the opening, and proving of our Point; That *God* ~~will~~ *lights* to go new waies

with his Church, and with the World; as also that we may be affected with them in our own hearts. The Lord saith in the Gospel, That a good man out of the good Treasury of his heart, bringeth forth good things. We know, that if a man speak, who is full, and hath much to say, he speaks quick, passeth with a freshness from one thing to another, and is still saying *new* things. What *Rarities* then, what *great*, what *new* things may we expect every day in the Affairs of the world for the Interest of the Church, when as the *Person* who hath the Government of All, is *Hee*, who hath in himself *Unsearchable Riches*? What Comfort is this to afflicted ones? what allurements to sinners? what ground of Hope, and rejoycing to Beleevers? what Light, and Direction to States-men? what Humiliation in themselves, what Exaltation in *Christ*, unto all? It is *Jesus Christ*, who hath all Power in *Heaven* and *Earth*; in *Spiritual*, *Civil*, and *Natural* things; who rules them all according to the *Unsearchable Riches*, which he hath in himself, of *Mercy*, *Righteousness*, *Holiness*, *Life*, *Joy*, *Glory*, *Wisdom*, and *Power*. Let every one now, that is weary, and heavy laden with any burden of sin, guilt, wrath, sickness, or sorrow, cry out; O the *Preciousness* of the Love, and Vertue of *Christ*! how unvaluable are they! O the Plentiffulness of those Precious Loves, and Vertues! how are they more for number, than the Sand on the Sea-shore, or the Stars in Heaven! I will no more look down upon the Darknes of mine own condition, nor round about for Help or Happiness from the Creature. I will wait upon him for visits every morning, for influences every moment, upon my Soul, Body, Relations, Affairs; and those *Great* above my Understanding, or Expectation, *New* without Number, or End.

There

There is a *third Scripture*, which concurs so fully with these *Two* mentioned before, which so comprehends the sence of them both, which gives so much light, and strength to our present buisness, that I may not omit it. *Ephes. 1. verse, 20, 21, 22. Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, Farr above al principality, and power, and every name, that is named, not only in this world, but in that, which is to come, And hath put al things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over al things to the Church.*

Pray observe some few short Particulars, which lye faire in the very outside of the words. First, The Lord *Jesus* stands not now in any Root of Nature, but upon a supernatural Root in the Resurrection from the dead by the Almighty power of the Father. Secondly, He is not in the Capacity of his Humane, but of his divine Nature. He is at the *Right Hand* of God, that is, in the Love, strength, Joy, Glory of the God-head. As the *Left Hand* of God is his wrath, his strange work, his Disguise: so his *Right Hand* is Love, his naked Face, his proper form, where he is seen, as he is, as the Saints shal behold him. Thirdly, He is not rank't in any order of the Creatures. He is set above al ranks, and orders of Created things, both men, and Angels with their severall dignitys, and degrees: *Farr above principalitys and powers.* Fourthly, He is cloath'd with an Image, a form, which hath no Proportion, Similitude, or Agreement with any thing of the Creatue. *He hath a Name above every Name, that is Named in this world, and that, which is to come.* The Name of *Christ*, which is the Image of his Nature, is not only above Sun, Moon, and Starres with al the powers of these Visible Heavens, and Living men upon the Earth: but also above the Angelical world in its freshest
D 2 glory,

glory, as it is that world, which is next to be unvail'd, and come forth upon the stage before the Eyes of men, when the Saints shall be, as the Angels of God. Fifthly, *Jesus Christ*; as his Person is thus stated, and in this Capacity; is made the Head over all things, to contrive, command, work al every where, as the Head doth in the body, which is the seat of the understanding, the fountaine of sence, and Motion. Sixthly, Al this is in order to the Church, for the Churches sake *He is given to be head over all to the Church*; that the Propriety, the pleasure, the Profite in his Person, Power, and Rule might be the Churches.

A *Miracle* is defined to be that, which is *Supra ordinem totius nature create*, Above the order of al Created Nature. What new, what strange things, what Miracles may we look for now in the government of the world, especially, when the Church is concerned: seeing that our Lord *Jesus* in this Capacity, as he is at the Right hand of God, set above al Rankes, and orders of the whol Creation, is made Head over al things for the Church? *Jesus Christ* could work no Miracles in one place, because of the unbeleefe of the Inhabitants. Our unbeliefe, in that we see not the Lord *Jesus*, as *Esaiah* saw him by a Spirit of Prophecie, sitting upon this Throne of the divine Nature, high and lifted up, above every Principality, and Power, is the Reason, why we have no more Miracles, no more of his new, and extraordinary Works in the midst of us. It is our unbeleefe, that we do not see, and acknowledg, those wonders, which he hath wrought, and is stil working, while he fills the whol earth with his glory from his Throne.

John, 6. 57. *Jesus* saith. *He, that eats me shall Live by me, even, as I live by the Father.* *Revel.* 10. 9. 11. The Angel gives

give St. John a Book to Eate, and then tells him, that he must prophesie before many peoples, and Nations, and Tongues, and Kings. If we did eate this spiritual, and Heavenly Person of *Christ*, which is the *Book of Life*, that *Word* coming forth from the mouth of God, on which alone man Lives; If we did by faith, in the vniity of the spirit, take in, concoct, digest, turn into Nature, and Nourishment these Evangelical truths concerning the Person of *Christ* above al, given to his Church; the *Headship* of *Christ* over al, for his Church: how certainly then, and how speedily should we be fed with Honey from the Rock? we should live in our own Persons, in our private, publike Capacities upon a constant, dayly Stream of *Miracles* coming down from the Father; we should draw down, and carry forth waters of life from the depth of the God-head, before the Kings of the Earth, and into the midst of the Nations. Thus much for the *First Argument* taken from *Jesus Christ*.

Arg. 2.

The *Second Argument* is drawn from the *Holy Spirit*. As the way of God is in *Christ* having his *New name* written upon his Person: so the Way of *Christ* in his Church, and in the world for his Church, is in the *Spirit*, and after the *Newness* of that.

Rom 7.6. But now we are delivered from the Law that being dead, wherein we were held, that we should serve in *Newness* of spirit, and not in the oldness of the Letter. The Soul of man is here set forth, as having two Husbands. The first Husband is the First *Adam*, the Flesh, the Natural Man. This being slaine by the death of the Lord *Jesus*; the Soul is set free from him, and from his Law, which is a Law of sin,

fin, and Death. Her second Husband, to whom she is married upon the Death of the first, is the last man, the Glorified Person of Christ, as He is in the Resurrection from the Dead. And now the Soul is subject only to the Law of this Husband, which is the Law of Free Grace, of Love, reigning by Righteousness, which is the Beavty in the Face of the God-head, unto Eternal Life, through Jesus Christ, by Vertue of our Marriage-union with him; the Love, Righteousness, and Immortality of God the Father letting it self forth upon his Person first, then in, and through him upon us, unto our Justification, Sanctification, and Glory. *That we should serve.* As to *Fear God* in the old Testament, and to *beleeve* in the new: so in both to *serve* him comprehends al parts of Religion, the whol Communion between God, and the Soul; by which God Ministers himself in streams of Truth, Grace, and joy to the Soul; or the Soul Ministers to him, by recejving him, by recejving al from him, by receiving him together with al, and by returning it self, and al things to him, in Love, humility, obedience, thanksgiving.

The two ways of this Service are the *Oldness of the Letter*, and the *newness of Spirit*. The Letter is that Law, which is proper, and fitted to the Principle of Nature, the flesh, the first *Adam* in his power, and purity. The *Spirit* is the Law of the New man, the Heavenly Image, and second *Adam*, as He is risen from the dead, and stands in a Root of Glory, from thence blossoming, and bringing forth fruit in al his Members. The Letter is like unto a Cestern. The Spirit is the Fountain. The water in a Cestern hath its stint, and set measure; it is a standing water, which hath no spring to quicken it, it is apt to corrupt with standing, and to dry away. Such is the Law of the Letter.

Letter. It is shut up in an outward, narrow form, and measure; it hath not its root in it self; it grows old, it darkens, withers, and dies away. But the *Spirit* is a Fountain, and as a Fountain hath a *Five-fold Newness*; of *Life*, of *Lustre*, of *Purity*, of *Variety*, of *Immortality*.

But here now, although it may seem to be a digression from my present scope, yet give me leave by the way to interpose a *Caution* very proper for this discourse of the *Letter*, and the *Spirit*; which is, that you mistake not the *Ryot*, *Excess*, and *Inordinacy* of the *flesh*, for the *Newness*, *Freedom*, and *Extraordinariness* of the *Spirit*. To assist you in this *Caution*, take this *Distinction* between the *Novelties*, and *Extravagancies* of the *flesh*; and the *Newness*, and *Extraordinariness* of the *Spirit*.

First: There is a *Newness* in which there is something unchangable, an inward Principle, a hidden Nature, a *Life*, a *Relish*, which is ever the same; however, the outward operations and manifestations vary. The *Life* of the *Spirit* is as a *Tree*. The *Tree* is new in the *Spring*, the *Summer*, the *Autumn*; having for every *Season*, its fresh puttings forth of *Leaves*, *Blossoms*, *Fruit*, ripe *Fruit*. Yet the *Tree* is still the same, hath the same *Root*, *Sap*, and *Nature*.

Secondly: There is a *Newness*, where all things are changed, not only the outward puttings forth, but the most inward Principle, where there abides nothing of the savor. This is like that change, where the *Rod* of *Moses* being cast upon the ground, was made a real *Serpent*, and the *Dust* of *Egypt* being cast up into the *Air*, became living *Lice*.

Now, as they say in *Phylosophy*, *Species, et Essentia rerum sunt sempiterna, et immobiles*: The *Essences*, and *Kinds* of things, are ever the same; however, there be an *Infiniteness* of

of uncertainty, and change in the *Individuals*, by the variety, and change of outward Accidents: So in a Saint compared with himself through the whol time of his Regeneracy, or compared with all other Saints in all Ages, there is the same new nature, the same inward savor in the Principle, in the Spirit; although the inward forms upon the understanding, may have great change according to the different degrees, and wayes of Light; as also the outward forms of life and Conversation, may have great variety in answer to the Light within. But where you see Persons, while they profess themselves to be Saints, changing all, having nothing of the same Nature, or Relish left; there is great reason to fear, that this is not the Newness of the Spirit, but the Wildness of the Flesh; not the freshness, and variety of the living Spring, but the Endless turnings, and windings of the old Serpent.

But to return now, and to shew you how this *Scripture*, which hath occasioned this short stay by the way, makes good that *Doctrine*, which we have in hand. All the way of *Jesus Christ* in the Saints, and in the World for the sake of the Saints, is after the newness of the spirit. It follows then, that it must be it self New, and Extraordinary.

Another *Scripture* compared with this, wil make the Proof from both more strong, and cleer. *Es.* 42. 18, 19, 20, 21. Remember ye not the former things, neither consider ye the things of Old. Behold I will do a new thing: now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the Wilderness, and Rivers in the Desert. The Beast of the field shall honor me, the Dragons, and the Owls, because I give Waters in the Wilderness, and Rivers in the Desert, to give drink to my People, my Chosen. This People have I formed for my self, they

they shall shew forth my praise. There are Four Things to be taken notice of in these words.

First : The Deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonians, is the proper subject of this Propheſie in the Letter of it, as you ſhal ſee at verſe 4. This Deliverance from the Babylonians, is made in Scripture univerſally a Type of every Deliverance of the People of God from the Powers of Darkneſs, and of this world; but more particularly of the Deliverance of the Church in the laſt daies from Antichriſt, which is Spiritual Babylon.

Secondly : In this Deliverance, the Lord laies aſide all Preſidents, every old Form, and Cuſtom; he works a New thing. What is this New thing? He makes a Way in the Wilderneſs; and Rivers in the Deſart. Theſe Expreſſions look backward by way of Alluſion to the Coming of the Children of Iſrael out of Egypt, when the Lord made a way for them through the Wilderneſs, going himſelf before them in the Pillar of a Cloud, and of Fire, and gave them Rivers of Water from the Rock, which followed them in the Deſert. But this Literal Senſe is not that which the Lord here intends. For this had been no New thing, but had only brought the former things to remembrance by the Imitation, and Re-iteration of them. Therefore the words look forward to an Allegorical, and Myſtical accompliſhment in the times of the Goſpel. We all know, that Jeſus Chriſt, is frequently held forth in the Goſpel, as the Way. John, 14. 6. He calls himſelf, The Way. Heb. 10. 20. He is ſaid to be the New, and Living Way, by the rending of the Vail of his Fleſh, and the raiſing of him up again in the Spirit. In like manner it is an Evident thing, that the Spirit of Chriſt in the Goſpel, is reſembled to Rivers of Water, as John, 7. 38. Out of his Belly ſhall flow Rivers of Living Water, ver. 39.

This Spake he of the Spirit.

This then is the *New* thing, which the Lord doth. He turns the outward face of things in Church and Common-wealth, into a Wilderness, puts al into Confusion, that no humane Eye can see any way, either forward, or backward. Then he comes forth with new, extraordinary appearances in *Christ*; as the Pillar of a Cloud burying all the Light and Life of the Creature in the Darkness of *Christ's* Death; as a Pillar of Fire, shining, and sparkling forth with a New Light, and Heat, from the Glory of his Resurrection. These Extraordinary Appearances in *Christ* the Lord makes his way, in which he walks, and into which he leads his People to walk with him in his wonders through the Churches, and the Nations.

When the Spirit of man becomes a Desert, like a winter-brook, that is passed away; and deceives the expectation of the weary Traveller; all Springs of Wisdom, Counsel, Help, Comfort in the Creature, are dried up: then the Lord comes forth in mighty and miraculous workings after the Newness of the Spirit, in the fresh flowings of that, and makes it to be, as Rivers in the Desert. Rivers have these Properties: First, They are from a Living Spiring: Secondly, They flow along with a great breadth, depth, and force: Thirdly, They flow continually, running along still with a fresh succession of New waters from the Head of the River: Fourthly, They make all things cheerful, and flourishing round about them. So doth the Lord in the Desert of the Creature put forth himself by his Spirit with an irresistible force, an uncessant Newness, with a quickness of life, a breadth and depth of design, from the immediate Fountain of the God-head.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It is observable here, that the Saints are they, who peculiarly drink of these Rivers. They have the immediate inward sense, Strength, Joy, Glory, the cheif ends, and benefit of these *Out-goings* of the God-head. But natural men signified by the *Beasts of the field*, the powers of this world; yea the most ignorant, and unbelieving, that sit in the greatest darkness, which are, as the *Owles*; Nay more, than that, the *Dragons*, the profanest, and wickedest persons both Princes, and Stats, who have the greatest enmity to *Christ*, and his Church; al these shal acknowledg, and give glory to the Lord in these Miraculous workings of his from Heaven; partly for the greatness of the Conviction by the presence and cleerness of the Appearances of God in the midst of them, before their Eyes; as is signified, verse, 19. *Now it shal spring forth, shal ye not see it?* partly for the relife, and the refreshing, which shal be extended to them also in their natural Man, and civil affayres. For so it is said; verse, 20. *They shal honor me, because I give waters in the wilderness &c.*

Fourthly, The end of al this is for the Saints; that they may be formed, and wrought up to God, to Spirituality and Heavenlyness, to his Likeness, to one Image, and Nature with him, to the Immediate enjoyment of him, to his Bosom, his Throne; there to raigne with him; from thence as chosen Vessels to carry forth the Praises of God in the Gospel, of his Love, his Righteousness, his Holyness, his Beauties, his Joys, his Glories, into the Nations, that the Saints may be as a Holy first-fruits, and the Nations, as a sanctified Lump through them. *This people have I formed for my self, to show forth my praise.* Verse, 21. I have now finished the two Arguments for the making good of the Doctrine; one taken from the Person,

and Office of *Christ*; the other from the Influences, and Operations of the *Spirit*; as both *Christ*, and the *Spirit* are in the Newness of the highest, and most Evangelical Glory; as both stand in relation first to the Church, then to the world for the Churches sake. I come now to the Uses.

Use, I.

The first Use is of *Thankfulness*. God makes it his delight and praise to go new, and extraordinary waies with his Church, and with the world in order to his Church. Let us then raise our delights, and his praises from the sense of those new, and extraordinary paths, in which the Lord hath walked forth before our Eyes in the midst of all the nations round about us for our sake. That the Newness of the divine footsteps in our daies, and in our Land may leave the deeper print upou our spirits; let us consider it in these Six Particulars. 1. *Our Changes*: 2. *The Quickness of our changes*. 3. *The Freshness upon our Changes*. 4. *The inward Life, whence our Changes spring*. 5. *The Seal upon our Changes from their Living Principle*. 6. *The Spirit of Grace evidencing it self, as the Principle, and the Seal*.

First, *The Changes*, Which have been upon us, shew the Newness of the Lords way with us. *Jerem* 48. 11. The Lord complains. *Moab, hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his Lees, and he hath not been emptied from Vessel to Vessel: therefore his tast remained in him, and his sent is not changed*. How often hath England been changed from Peace to Warr, from one Warr to another, from one form of Government to another, from Extremities to Enlargements, from Enlargements to Extremities again? These Changes have been, as so many Vessels, out of which

which, and into which we have been emptyed. Are we stil upon the Lees of Carnality, and Corruption? If we discern not God in a new Glory; if we discern not *Jesus Christ* with his new name; if we discern not the Newness of the Operations of the Spirit in al these things; then doth our Earthly tast hitherto remain, and our fleshy sent is not changed. O for a refinedness of Soul now from the Lees of Earth to a pure wine of spirituality! O for a heavenly tast, a heavenly sent! How should we relish this feast of new delicacys, which the Lord sets forth for us? How should we love *Jesus Christ* for the Savor of his new, and good Oyntments; in which he powrs forth himself into the midst of us?

Revel. 6. 12. We reade of the *Sun* turning black, as *Sack Cloath of Hair*; the *Moon*, as blood. *vers. 13.* *Stars of Heaven* fel unto the Earth, even as a *Fig-tree* casteth her untimely *Figs* being shaken by a mighty winde. *Verse, 14.* *Heaven* departed, as a *Scroule*, rolled together. *Verse, 16.* The reason of al this, *i.e. The Face of him, that sits on the Throne, and the wrath of the Lamb.* Many times over in this our little world of these divided Islands we have seen, the *Sun* of our Religious Formes, our Church-state becomming black, as a *Sack-Cloath of Hair*, which is a mourning weed; the *Moon* of our Civil affayres, as *Blood*, Nay al *Blood*: we have seen the *Heaven* of the Supream power pass away, as a scrol of Parchment roled up, and laid by; our Eminent Persons, which were, as *Stars* in the Heaven of that Power, shining with a Lustre, and ruling with an Influence of universal Authority, yet on a soden falling from this Heaven to the Earth of a common rank, and obscure condition. Do we not thorow al this perceive the Face of God sitting upon his Throne among us, a Throne of most exalted Grace, and loving kindness to his

his people, but of the most exalted vengeance, and wrath to his enemy? observe those two things, *the Face*, and *the Face of God sitting upon the Throne*. What unvailings of new, and extraordinary glorys do these Expressions speak forth? Are not these the Seal, to which these Nations, as Wax are turned, and changed? Blessed are they, that stand within these Wheels, to be carryed along by them, and move together with them. Over others, who see them not, these Wheels pass, and break them to pieces.

Joel. 2. 30. The Lord saith; *I wil shew wonders in the Heavens, and in the Earth, blood, and Fire, and pillars of smoke.* Verse, *31.* *The Sun shal be turned into darkness, and the Moon into blood before the great, and terrible day of the Lord come.* There are three daies of the Lords coming: First, *To a Particular Nation*: Secondly, *At his Incarnation*: Thirdly, *To the last Judgment*. All these are Capable of having this Scripture applyed to them, especially where the first of these daies, the *Coming of Christ to a Nation* follows after the *Second day of his Incarnation*, and borders upon the *Third day of his last coming*. This Scripture hath been literally fulfilled in our times, in our land. What frequent Eclipses of Sun, and Moon have we seen? What Comets? Concussions, and Prodigyes in al the Elements, Earth quakes, Tydes changing their Courses, Meteors of al sorts in the Ayre, Devouring Fires? Behold, the Earth, the Air, the Waters, the Fire, the Heavens see the Lord, and are troubled; shal his Saints be insensible of him? shal not they shout, and say: This is the day, which no Created, or usual light, but the Lord hath made by his shivings forth; It is wonderful in our Eyes, beyond the whole Course of Nature; we wil rejoyce, and be glad in it.

Secondly, *The Quickness of our Changes*. This is the *Second thing*,

thing, that argues the Newness of Gods way with us. I intreate you here to compare 2 Scriptures; Hagg. 2.6. For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Tet once it is a little while, and I wil shake the Heavens, and the Earth, and the Sea, and the dry land, verse, 7. And I wil shake al Nations, and the desire of al the Nations shal come, and I wil fil this House with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. Hebr. 12. 26. Whose voyce then shook the Earth: but he hath promised saying; Tet once more I shake not the Earth only, but also the Heaven: Verse, 27. And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are made, that those things, which cannot be shaken, may remaine. The comparing of these two Texts affords us these Particular Observations: First, This word, Once, signifies one continued act of shaking unto an universal, and Total Change. Secondly, That which makes this shaking is the Newness of Christs comming forth in the unchangable Glory of his Father, and of the Spirit. For, the Prophet Haggi seeming to speak of the first comming of Christ in the flesh, to fil that present Temple, which was then building, with the Glory of his Doctrine, and Miracles, is by the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews interpreted of the comming of Christ in Glory, as being the truth, and the end, to which the other comming was only a Type, and a Preparation. So also, that which the Prophet calls. The Desire of the Nations; is in the Hebrews, called, Those things, which cannot be shaken, in opposition to things, that are made, and to be taken away. Both together clearly describe Jesus Christ in the Newness of a Heavenly Glory, which can never fade. It is before this Newness of Christ, at it secretly beames forth into the Creation, that Old things shake, and fall away. Thirdly, Jesus Christ, comes first in his Desirablenesses, to believers, to those among the Nations, who desire him. This seems,

seemes to be signified by that expression : *The desire of al Nations shal come.* He shal come under that formality, as the *Desire* of the Nations. The Saints in every Nation stand for the whol Nation in the esteem of God, they being the Corn in the heap, the rest of the nation, as the Chaffe. *Esa. 43. 4.* The Lord saith to his people : *Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have Loved thee : therefore wil I give men for thee, and people for thy life,* or as it is in the Margin, *for thy person.* Those whom the Lord loves in a Nation, are the only Figures there ; the rest are Cyphers, which signifie nothing of themselves. *James. 1. 14.* The Children of God are said to be *a Kind of first frutes of his Creatures.* So are they the *first fruits* of every Nation. As the *first fruits* were presented to God every year at the Tabernacle, or Temple by the hands of the Preist in the stead of the whol Lump: so the beleivers are presented to God in the spirit by Jesus Christ, as filling up the place of the whol Nation.

Upon this account, when the prophet hath said : *The desire of al Nations shal come ;* he adds ; *He shal fil this House with his Glory.* Under the Gospel, and in the spiritual truth, which answers the Judaical Tipe, the Saints are the House of God. *1 Corin. 3. 16.* *Know ye not, that ye are the Temple of God ?* When the Lord comes to work his wonders in the world, he first comes into his Church, into the spirits of his Saints, fills them with that spiritual Glory shining from his own person, which is the sign of his outward commings forth, before he comes ; and the inside of them, when he is come. From hence, as from his Temple, he shines forth by degrees upon the world ; from these, as the first frutes ; he sends forth a blessing
to

to the whol Lump of the Creatures. Fourthly, When these shakings begin to break forth from the Spirits of the Saints into the World, they are swift, and spreading. *Tet a little while: And I wil once more shake Heaven, and Earth.* As when a stone falls into the Water, the Circles in the Water made round about it, do in a moment Multiply, and as they Multiply, grow wider each than other: So when Jesus Christ comes with the Newness of a spiritual Glory into his House, which is the heart of a Saint; from thence he spreads himself in the newness of his Power, and mighty works over the Nation round about; from thence enlargeth himself in a wider Circle to the Neyghbouring Nations; so he goes on, til he ouerspreade with his Changes not the Earth only, but also the Heavens; and al this in a very little space, as fire catcheth, or the lightning flyeth.

Now let us look home. Our Changes, since the beginning of these times, have truly been so quick, and thick; that they may wel appear one continued shaking. You then in this Nation whose Souls love the Lord Jesus, is *your Desire* come? while others as Cyphers, do bear the empty shadow of the outward work in these new, and Extraordinary Motions; is his presence, his person, his operation precious, and of great value to you? Doth he fill you, who are his house, with the freshness of his light, and Glory; while others stand without, at a distance, seeing a throng of changes, and wonders; but know not, what is the matter? Where then are your cries of Joy? The voyce of our beloved! Behold, he comes, leaping over the Hills, passing with swift changes over the powers of this world; he comes *consuming* al old things, the old Heaven and Earth with the heat of his presence; but *changing* his own and al things unto
 F them

them into the newness, and Immortality of the Spirit ; making them new, together with a New Heaven, and a New Earth round about them.

Thirdly, *The freshnes of our Changes.* Prov. 25. 4, 5. *Take away the dross from the Silver, there shall come forth a Vessel for the finer: Take away the wicked from the King, and his Throne shal be established in Righteousnes.* The former of these verses is an Allegory explained in the latter. Both have a Mystical sense pertayning to every Saint ; and Typical concerning Jesus Christ. Take away the Dross of Corruption out of the Heart from the Silver of Grace ; and the Saint will be a King in the Spirit upon a Throne of Glory founded on the Righteousnes of God, and his Spirit in Jesus Christ ; this King will be a pure Silver Vessel for God the finer to set on his table, and fil with the Treasure of his Divinity. Take away the dross of Corruption from the Silver of the Divine Image in the Creature ; then wil the whol Creation be a Vessel of honor for the Father to fil with his Wine ; then wil it be a Throne founded on the Eternal Rock, on which Jesus Christ shal sit down, as a King. This extends it self to Nations, and Priuciples also. Let us take a view of our selves in the Glas of this Truth.

If we look to the great Parliament from the beginning of it : was there not a Silver there, a precious Metail of excellent principles, and Eminent persons ? But this Silver was mingled with the Dross of much Carnality, and Corruption. Hath not every change since that time been, as a fire, to take away the Dross from the Silver ? Hath not evey succeeding form of things when it hath come first out of the fire of the fore-going Change, bin as a Vessel for the finer, with a greater Preciousnes, Purity, Beauty, Lustre, Life, and usefulness unto God ?

How

How then is that day of the Lord risen upon us, which is to try all things? How should our mouths be filled with laughter, and praises for this *New* thing, which God doth, this *New* day, which God bringeth forth from Heaven? Say now to Hypocrites; Woe to you. But say to the Righteous, It shall be well with you. For the Beams of this day are a Manifesting light, a Refining fire to all: but they are withal to the Saints a covering gloy, and a Cherishing Love. Our King is come forth into our Land, not only to march through it with his troupes; but to establish his throne here in Righteousness, and to sit down upon it. O Dross, Dross, melt away before the presence of the Lord. For his Eyes are a flame of fire. They are still Kindling fresh Furnaces of Change.

Fourthly, *The Life in these Changes from which they flow.* Rom. 12. 11. you have the knot of a three-fold Precept held forth: *Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.* This is likewise a Divine Character upon the *Newness* of extraordinary Times, Works, and Persons. When the Lord hath any fresh, and peculiar piece of work, in which he is to be served, he fills men with a strange unwonted vigor in his business, to contrive, attempt, and execute wonderful things. To this end, as a man puts fire under a pot, so he sends forth his Spirit after a new manner into their Hearts, that they boyl, and run over; they are no more in their own power, they can no longer contain themselves. Such a Description as this, David makes of himself, Psal. 39. 1. *I said I will take heed to my ways that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth as with a Bridle, while the wicked are in presence: I was dumb with silence, I held my peace from good, my sorrow was stirred: My heart was hot within me, while I was musing,*

the fire burned; then spake I with my tongue. David, and Christ in him, were oppress'd by wicked men. He resolves to suffer in silence, and to suppress all Motions towards the outward advancement of Goodness. At length the Word of the Lord comes to him, first it warms his heart, by degrees it grows hotter, while he mused upon it, is irresolute, unwilling to come forth openly upon the Stage; it becomes a fire, it breaks forth, burns out like a mighty and irresistible flame.

You have an Example like to this in St. Paul; Acts, 20. 22. *And behold now I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, &c.* God had a new, and great work for St Paul to do, to testify to the Gospel of Christ, by preaching, and by sufferings; at Jerusalem the chief City of the Jews; at Rome the Head City of the World, before Rulers and Princes. And now though afflictions, and death were Manifestly before his Eyes in this journey; though friends, Saints, Prophets, his own heart lay Weeping, Bleeding Breaking in his way, to stop him from going on in that course, from whence he should returne no more; as ye may see, verse, 23. 25. 27, 28. Chapter, 21. verse, 4. 11, 12, 13. Yet he shuts his Ears, and his Eyes to all these, treads them under his feet: goes over them all. Would you know the reason *He was bound in Spirit.* An extraordinary power of the Spirit came upon him, bound up all his facultys in its heavenly chaines, and carryed him Captive to its Divin Force, and Wil.

There are many witnesses, that the like unto this hath been heard, known, and felt often in our daies, and affaires. Supernatural Impressions, Divine and Irresistible Impulsions, as gales of wind from Heaven, have filled the Spirits, affections, counsels, and actions of men, like

like sails, by which the Ship of this Common-wealth hath bin carryed on from port to port, from change to change. When the two disciples wer going to Emmaus, & Jesus Christ in the midst of them; they said; *did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us?* but their Eyes were held that they could not know him. If Jesus Christ have been in the midst of us, as a fire; if he have made the hearts of his Servants to burn within them, yea, to flame forth, to lick up all the water of opposition, to consume all the Damps of Discouragement, that have been cast upon this fire, from their own reason, reputation, affections, purposes, former principles within; from difficulties, dangers, dissuasions of friends, combinations of of Enemies without: Shal our Eyes stil be held that we should not know him, who is thus a burning, and shining Light among us? or shal our spirits be held from rejoycing, and dancing in this Light, while its season lasteth?

Fifthly: *The Inward Principle of Life being the Seal upon our Outward Changes.* 2 Tim. 2. 16. *Nevertheless the Foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this Seal; the Lord knoweth who are his.* And let every one that nameth the Name of Christ, depart from iniquity. This word, *Nevertheless*, implies a tacite *Objection* arising from the foregoing words of the Apostle, verse 17, 18. *Hymeneus and Philatus* of eminent Beleevers, and Preachers of the Gospel, were become Hereticks, whose words did spread, and kill like a *Gangrene*; insomuch, that they had overthrn the faith of some. Now might a poor Saint say; *Good God!* what way is there to attain to a sound and saving Faith, which cannot be overthrown? or when shal I know that my Faith is thus sound, and saving? Who can be sure of their Faith, that it shal not fail them, when it hath failed these?

these? The Apostle gives *two Answers* to this *Objection*: First, *The Foundation of the Lord standeth sure*. God the Father of our Lord Jesus, makes himself in the hearts of his Children, to be a sure Foundation unto their Faith, so that it can never be shaken. This Foundation he layeth in the fair colors of his own Spirit, of a mystical, and peculiar Union in the Spirit, of an especial work of Grace flowing from this Union. Secondly, This *sure Foundation* at the bottom of our hearts, and faith, is also the Seal of Assurance upon them both: *Having this Seal, the Lord knoweth who are his*. In Spiritual things, that which is the Life, is the only Light, which is therefore so called in the Gospel; *the Light of Life*; the Principle is the Seal; *Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise*, saith St. Paul, Ephes. i. That Light of Knowledge which is *Originally* the Knowledge of the Lord in us, that *Communicatively*, by Vertue of the Union, is our Knowledge, and this Knowledge is our Seal. As in Natural things the Eye sees not alone, neither doth the Soul; but both concur in every act of sight. So is it in every act of Spiritual Sence; *The Spirit of the Lord witnesseth together with our Spirits*, saith St. Paul, Rom. 8. The Spirit of the Lord, and our Spirit, like the *Soul* and the *Eye*, joyntly concur in every act of Spiritual Knowledge. The Lord knoweth in us, we know in the Lord that we are his. Thus this Union, which is the *Principle of Life* in us, is in like manner the *Seal of Light*.

Object.

The world hath often objected to the servants of the Lord in the great Works of our times: You plead inward Principles, Power, and Light, for your Justification in extraordinary waies; that it is from the fervency of your spirit in the Service of the Lord; and of the publick

lick welfare: How shal we know this, that you do not Cloath contrary designs, and corrupt interests with these pretences? how can we, or you tel that your impressions are not delusions?

Ans.

What hath the answer been? Hath it not been, that of *Jesus Christ* to the Jews, when they refused to mourne to his weeping, or to dance to his Musick: *Wisdom is justified of her Children, Matth.* The Lord *Jesus*, as he is by his Spirit the *Power* of God in us; from which we act and on which we stand, as on a *sure Foundation*. So is he in like manner the *Wisdom* of God in us, by which we know him, and his out-goings, by which we are also known of him, and owned by him. This is our *Seal*. As many, as have fellowship with us in the same principle of divine Wisom, wil according to the measure of it, so farr, as they are free from carnal prejudices, and temptationsto exercise this *Principle*; know, and own this *Seal*. The Manifestations of God are in the *Flesh*; but the justification of those Manifestations is in the *Spirit*. And this is that, which makes, the whol way of Godliness a *Mystery*: *1 Tim. 3. 16.*

But now it is necessary to interpose *two Cautions* for the removing of *two Objections*.

Object. 1.

This Principle seems to make the Light of *Reason* useless even in Civil things; and to lay aside in Humane Affairs the common Principles of *Natural Light*; by which we should converse with men, as men, and approve our selves to them.

Object. 2.

This makes a Gap in the Hedge of all Civil Government for Licenciousness, and Confusion to break in; when every

every man may alike pretend to an inward Justification.

I intreat you therefore to keep your selves close to these *Cautions*, which I shal now add for the clearing of this matter from these Aspersions.

Chap. I.

It is the duty of every person in every Affair, to provide for things honest, not only in the sight of God, but in the sight of all men. This is a Principle and Law in Christianity: *Rom 12. 19. Provide for things honest in the sight of all men*: *Honest*, or *Beautiful* and *Comely*; for so the word signifies; *in the sight of all men*; that is, in that *Light of Nature*, which shines universally in all men. The *Natural Light* in the Conscience, and Understanding of Man, is a *Picture* of the *Spiritual Light*, which is the *Life*. *Reason* is a *Shadowy Figure* of *Jesus Christ*. Now as the *Life*, and the *Picture*, if it be true, answer one another; and that which is beautiful in the one, will be so in the other too: so the *Spirit*, and *Reason*, mutually give their testimony each to other; what is comely in the eye of one, is so to both.

St. Paul prays, *2 Thess. 2. 3.* to be delivered from unreasonable men; for all men have not Faith. It is true that those, who are not *Spiritual*, are also unreasonable, the word is almost *Absurd*, incapable of any common place of *Reason*, any common Principles of *Natural light*. In another place. *Tit. 1. 15.* The same Apostle tells us, that to those, who are defiled, and unbelieving all things are impure, even their minds, and consciences are defiled. As a Poet calls the light of the Moon, when she is Ecclipsed by the interposal of the Earth between the Sun, and her, that his beams cannot flow freely, and purely unto her, *Lucem Malignam*, a Malignant light: so is it in men meerly natural;

tural; the prince of darkness, and a principle of Corruption inwardly; the world with carnal interests, and Humors outwardly, put in between the Face of God, the Fountaine of al light, and their Souls, to the making of such an *Eclypse*, that the light of their *Minds*, the highest, and purest part of their spirits, the lights of their *Consciencs*, the divinest part of their *Minds*, like the tops of the Mountaine which receive the beams of the Sun neerest, first, and fairest; the light of *both* these is *defiled*, and become *Malignant*. Upon this account, they either are unable to judg a right of that Testimony, which the light of *Nature* inwardly gives, or else unwilling outwardly to acknowledg this inward Testimony; but do falsify, corrupt, deny it according to their fleshly lusts, and ends. They only for the most part, in most affaires, can understand, and submit to the light of *Reason*, and *Nature*, especially there, where *Jesus Christ* comes forth in *new*, and extraordinary waies upon the Face of *Nature*, and *Civil* things; who have the *Spirit* in them loosing their *Reason*, which *Satan* hath bowed down for so many years, like the Woman in the Gospel.

Yet notwithstanding al this, a Christian is in every thing to follow after, whatsoever is praise-worthy, of good report, comely, with God, and with men, in that, which is the *true light* of men, and *right Reason*. So, if their *Minds* be not altogether reprobate, and their *Consciencs* seazed, if there be any spark of *Natural* light left alive in them, you shal approve your selves to the *Consciencs*, and minds of men inwardly; although they outwardly speak evil of you. As the *Historian* says of the *Romans* concerning that excellent Person, their deliverer *Camillus*; *simul oderant, et Mirati sunt*: they wil admire you, while they hate you.

Answ. 2.

Caut. 2. Let every one, that nam's the name of Christ, depart from iniquity. Whoever pleads a *Spiritual* life, and light for the *Principle*, and *Seal* of his actions, ought to beware that he sow not divers seeds in this field, that he mingle not *Fleshly* designs with *Spiritual* discoverys. *Cursed be he, that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully.* If you undertake the worke of the Lord to do your own work the better; If you make a shew of the work of the Lord, or make use of the work of the Lord so farr, to cover, and to bring forth the works of the *Flesh*: there lies a curse upon you. The Name of the Lord *Jesus* is like the water of *jealousie*, which the suspected woman was to drink. If thou cal the name of the Lord *Christ*, and of his spirit to witness falsly, while thou art unchast, and untrue to thy spiritual principles, and ends; while thou knowest thy spirit to have plaid the harlot, and to live in uncleanness with this present world: this *Name* wil, like that *Drink*, make thy belly to Swel, and thy Bowels to rot within thee; it wil certainly bring thee to destruction with shame, and abhorrency.

He that sets upon *Extraordinary* things upon the account of an *Extraordinary Principle, Seal*, hath one of these two things to rely upon; First, A *Divine Power* in an irresistible way to subdue the spirits, and Forces of men to him: Secondly, or else a *Divine Presence* in an unexpressible sweetness to support him, when he shal suffer in the thoughts of men, or at the Barr of *Ordinary* powers. How watchful ought we to be in assayres of so high a nature, or consequence, that neither *Hypocricy*, nor *Delusion* shut the Door to these Confidences in us?

Sixthly, *The spirit of Grace, the principle, and Seal of these changes.* This is the last Argument of the *Newness* and *Extraordinariness*.

Extraordinariness of the way of the Lord Jesus in the midst of us. There are *five Marks* of the Spirit of Grace.

First, *The Spirit of Grace is a Spirit of Prayer.* Zach. 12. 9, 10. *And it shal come to pass in that day, that I wil seek to destroy al the Nations, that come against Jerusalem: And I wil poure upon the House of David, and upon the Inhabitants of Jerusalem a Spirit of Grace, and Supplication.* Two things are observable here: First, It is an *Argument*, that the Lord hath a designe by himself to destroy the enemies of his people, when he pours out a *Spirit of Grace* upon his people. Secondly, He alwaies, and more especially, when he is seeking the ruine of his enemies, joynes these two, a *Spirit of Grace*, and of *Supplication*. Are there not many, that can testifie by their own experience concerning the works of these times; that the Heart of God, in a *Spirit of Grace* hath bin let down into the Bosom of his beloved ones; that thus their hearts have bin by a *Spirit of Supplication* drawn up into the Bosom of God, and have drawn forth these deliverances from the *Wells of Salvation* there? These *Wells* are Deep, the Deep things of God, his Love, his Wisdom, his Righteousness, his power, his Glory, as these lie in the very depths of his Essence, and Divine Nature. But Saints have had their *Buckets*, their *Hearts*, to draw with; and a *line*, a *Spirit of Supplication*, long, and sure enough to let down their hearts into these deep Wells of Salvation, which are in the Heart of God. These *Wells* are stil full of living Waters; and these *Buckets* are stil going. Saints keep your expectations stil fresh.

Secondly, *The spirit of Grace is a spirit of Prophecy.* Esai. 43. 9. God challengeth al the Nations: *Let them bring forth their witnesses, who among them can shew us former things?* that is, things before they come to pass, or, things be-

fore their times, before the world, by a spirit of Prophecie. Verse, 12. *I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange God among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.* Hath not the Lord many Witnesses in these Nations, yea, here present? I know, he hath. In the former daies, when ye were with him at your Banquets of spiritual enjoyments, on your Bed of spiritual Loves; then did he by his spirit before hand signifie within you the sufferings of these times, and the Glory, which hath risen out of them. And as he hath declared, so hath he saved us, by the *Jane Spirit*. And now tel me, ye that are the Lords witnesses; when ye are in your holiest seasons, when there is no strange God, or Love, but *Jesus Christ* alone shines in the midst of your spirit; doth he not stil shew you greater things, than these, which are yet to come?

Thirdly, *The spirit of Grace is a spirit of Holiness.* Ephes. 1. 13. It is called a Holy spirit. *Ye were sealed with the Holy spirit of Promise.* Holiness is the Character, and Seal of that spirit of Grace, which is promised to the Saints. Psal. 99. 8. *Thou answeredst them, O Lord our God; thou wert a God that forgavest them, though thou takest Vengeance of their iniquities.* The Lord testified his presence with the Jews in the Wilderness by his Holiness, in taking Vengeance of their Inventions.

There is a *Three fold Vengeance*, which the Lord takes for Sin. First, On the Persons, and this three waies: 1. By Casting them off for ever: 2. By Cutting of the inward Beams of spiritual Communion between himself, and them for a season, perhaps for al their life long. 3. By Clouding their outward Man with trouble, and sorrow. God alwaies pardons iniquity to the Persons of his Children in respect to the first of these Vengances; He cannot give

give them over or cease to love them: Sometimes also in respect to the second, and third. He continues the sweetness of their Communion with him; and the Serenity of their natural comforts un-interrupted. Secondly, The *Second Vengeance* for sin is on the *publike Cause*. Thus the Lord did forgive the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, and not take Vengeance on the *publike Cause*. For though they all died in the desert, yet the Lord kept his cause alive, carryed that Victoriously over *Jordan* into the Land of *Canaan*, and planted it to grow there for many generations. The *Third Vengeance* on the *Inventions*, on the Corruptions, and Idols of the Heart. In this sense the Lord never pardons any.

The Spirit, which hath bin our guide, hath Signally declared it self a Spirit of Grace by its abundant Forgiveness, and a Spirit of Holiness by the Vengeance, which it hath taken for Sin. When any have risen up against him, his Parity, his Progress, from the Enmity of the Serpent; he hath made the Earth to open, and swallow them up into the darkneses below by a Natural, or Civil Death: he hath made fire to come down from Heaven, a spiritual fire of Divine judgement, and wrath, by which they have bin so withered, dried, and burnt up; that they have lost all that Greenness of Religion, Honor, Honesty, Morality, Natural light, which they seemed before to have; and have fallen to open Perfidiousness, to ranting Profaneness, to a reprobate Sense, a stupid Atheisticalness. But, when the Children of the Kingdom have transgressed by temptations of Covetousness, Ambition, Fleshliness, Passion, Delusions, Spiritual Pride, have fallen to Murmurings, Divisions, Sensuality, Worldly Designs: although this Spirit may have pardoned all this to their Persons, hiding them in the cleft
of

of the Rock, in the wounds of *Christ*, there preserving their *Outward*, their *Inward* Life, and Peace, while he hath passed by: yet hath he taken open *Vengeance* of their *Inventions*, by manifest, eminent Disappointments in their Expectations, and endless confusions in the way of their Designs. Yet all this while hath the *Holy Spirit* pardoned the sins of all Parties to the Cause. He hath not suffered that to fall, but hath gone on when it seems to faint, renewing its strength, carrying it up on high, as on an Eagles wing, enlarging it in Victory, Peace, Spiritual Liberties at home; spreading its Branches over the Seas, and to Forraign, far distant Lands; breaking the Head of the *Leviathan*, the chief strength of *Antichrist* in the deep Waters.

Fourthly: *The Spirit of Grace is a Spirit of Unity.* Ephes. 4. 3. *Endeavoring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace.* *Unity* is the Character, the most immediate and inseparable Property of the *Spirit*. The *Bond of Peace* hath its strength, and root in the *Unity of the Spirit*: as the *Sympathy* and *Union* of all the Fellow members in the Body arise from, and is preserved by *One Soul*, by the *Unity of the Soul*.

There is a *Twofold Unity*. First, of *Inward Affection*. Secondly, of *Outward Effect*. As to the *Latter* of these, I had rather much speak in silent Groans to God, than by words to men; bleed inwardly, than breath forth outward Complaints for the Breaches of the Daughter of my People. But so far, as concerns the *First* of these, the *Inward Affection to Unity*, let me call forth you, who have the Testimony in your selves, that it hath been the *Spirit* in the *Living Creatures* in the Hearts of the Saints, quickened by the Life of *Christ*, which hath been in the *Wheels*, that have turned about, and carried on this whol
work

work from the beginning hitherto; I appeal to you. What are the Melings, the Weepings over the Divisions among the Saints? What Yearnings, and turnings of Bowels after a Reunion? Do you not in the secret of your hearts, in your secret Meetings, bleed forth your souls before the feet of your Savior, at every breach in his Body; as at a Wound, or the Cutting off of some Member in your own Body? As Jacob lamented over the loss of his Children: Joseph is not, Simeon is taken away from me, you would have Benjamin also; all these things are against me: So you mourn; such Brethren left us at such a change; these Saints are not with us in this change; and there are others ready to divide themselves from us at the next turn of affairs: all these things are against us. As the spirit of God spreads it self over the deep of darkness at the beginning of the Creation, like a Bird over her naked young ones, till they be hatcht up, and sledged, to form it to a beautiful, and harmonious World, Light and Order: Do you not after the same manner perceive the Spirit of Unity on your souls stretch forth it self over all your fellow Members, that lie in a Chaos, in a Deep of Darkness, Division, and Confusion? As Jesus Christ once wept forth these Words over Jerusalem: As a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings; How often would I have gathered thee, but thou wouldst not? So he weeps, so he speaks the same words in your Souls to all his divided Brethren in these Nations: as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wing; how long have I called and waited, and longed to gather you up into the Unity of my Spirit, that you might not by your scatterings become a prey to the Kite? but hitherto you will not. Joseph when he thought fit to speak roughly, and deal severely with his Brethren; with much difficulty concealed his affections, was forced to make haste into a private room to weep. Hath this been your temper, when the wisdom of State, or the season hath made it seem necessary to you to handle any one of Christs Flock roughly? have your Bowels been turned within you? hath it been hard, and grievous to you to act this strange part, and to bide your affections? have you inwardly, and privately melted into tears while you have openly thundered out hard speeches? Do you not much more contend with God by Spiritual Wrafflings to have the hearts of all his People, that differ from you; than you do by outward force, or policy, with them, to have the upper hand of them?

It.

If these things be thus, go on, and prosper. When *Esau* came with an Army against *Jacob* his Brother, *Jacob* wrestled with God, at *Penuel*, which signifies the Face, or Vision of God, he conquered his Brother the most excellent way, like a Prince, in conquering God, and carrying away a Blessing by Conquest. *Esau*, when he met him, instead of drawing his Sword upon *Jacob*, embraced him, and offers him those Bands for his Guard, which came forth Enemies. Could one *Jacob* thus subdue the Heart of rough *Esau*? and shal not many *Jacobs* by their strong cries in the Ears of God, and tears in his Bosom, prevail with God for a Victory of Love over the Hearts of many *Jacobs*, only disguised, and concealed under the rough hairy Garments of *Esau*? Yes, the hour is coming, in which you shal come forth hand in hand in Spiritual Dances, and answer one another with Spiritual Songs, saying; *These our Brethren were lost, but now are they found in our arms: These Brethren were dead one to another, but now behold they live together in the Unity of the Spirit.* As *Joseph*, and his Brethren; so shal you after long Concealments be discovered one to another, in a Light of Heavenly Love; then shal ye fall one upon anothers Necks, and weep for joy; then shal you say, *We meant evil, but it was the Lords contrivance, who hath turned all to good.* Thus shal ye receive one another into the Glory of God, as *Christ* hath received you.

Fifthly, *The Spirit of Grace* is a spirit of love to *Jesus Christ*. It makes his person alone, and the Glory of that to be the Mark, and Price of our calling: *Phil. 3. 14.* As water wil ascend as high, as it first descends: so the spirit, which is often compared to water, is like water in this, if it come down from *Christ*, it wil carry the ayme, and affections of the soul to *Christ*. That which is the first Principle,

Principle, is the last end. If it be Jesus Christ, who hath been the first principle of motion in our hearts, he will be our only End, we shal terminate, and rest no where, but in him. When *Jacob* had served an Apprenticeship of seven years for the Love of beautiful *Rachel*, he was marryed by *Laban* to bleare-eyed *Leah*. Did this satisfie *Jacob*? No, He chose to endure the hardship of another service for seven years more, to suffer the heats by day, and frosts by night in the open fields, that he might gain his first Love. If it were a Conjugal Love to the person of *Christ*, which moved us to undertake, and undergo the hard service of so many years in difficulty, danger; in a field of warre, Blood, and Death: we cannot now lie down, and take up our rest in the Embraces of the bleare-eyed Beavty of this World, though it be given to us in marriage, and be exceedingly fruitful to us. No, We shal begin another service of as many years more in prayers, in conflicts, in sufferings of all sorts, til he, whom our Souls love, come, and give his own person into our Armes. As the *Spouse* in the *Canticles*; *Cant*, 3, 4. We shal never cease, til we hold his glorified person in our Marriage-Embraces, never to let him go more, until we bring him into our Mothers house, into this visible World, to make all things new, and to raigne here as he doth in Heaven. It is not this that a Saint seeks thorow Seas of water and Blood, to rob the Nations of their Gold, but to communicate to them this God. It is not this, which is his joy, and triumph, to see his enemys drowned in the Floods; but to let in the Rivers of *Christ*s blood upon them to over flow them, and that they may die the Death of Christ only.

When *Alexander* drew neer to *Jerusalem* with his conquering Army, he was met by the High Priest in all his

Ornaments, his Garment, his Girdle, his Ephod, his Urim, and Thummim, of Gold, Silk, Sky-color, Purple, White, all sorts of precious Stones, with the most Holy Crown upon his Head, which was the Figure of the Glory of *Jesus Christ* at the right hand of the Father in Heaven, as he is our true High Priest. *Alexander* seeing him, said; In this very form did that God appear to me in a Dream by night in *Macedonia*, who commanded me to pass over into *Asia*, and undertake this War. Upon this account he used the Jews with all Kindness and Honor. My end in bringing in this Story, is to make this Application of it: If we have had any glimpses in our Spirits of our dear Savior in the Heavenly Beauty and Glory of his Person; if we have been carryed on to this Work by his Spiritual Appearances, and Power in us: then will not our work be at an end, til we see him shining forth in the full Glory of his Person and Spirit, not upon us only, but upon the whole Earth. The Vow of *Christ* is upon us, not to give sleep to our Eyes, til we have found a settled Habitation for our Lord *Jesus*, as he is cloathed with all his Spiritual Glories, in our own hearts, and with men. I have done now with the last Evidence of the Presence of our God with us in the New way of his Son, and Spirit; which Evidence is this, That the Spirit of Grace hath been the Principle, and Seal of these great Works and Changes in the midst of us. The Use that I would make of it, is to enlarge us in our Praises, that we may now see, and say with joy; The Lord *Jesus* goes up on high in our Land, he carries Captivity captive, he gives Gifts to men, even to the rebellious, that himself may dwell among them. I have done with the First Use.

Use

Use 2. A Caution to beware of four things.

Caut. 1. Limit not God. This was the sin of the Jews in the Wildernes: *They limited the Holy One of Israel*, Psal. 7. 41. Princes love not to be prescribed, much less doth God. *To what will ye liken God, and to what likeness wil ye compare him?* Es. 40. 18. If the Lord be doing Great things among us, according to the Exaltation of Christ; if he be doing New things according to his own Spirit; what measure will ye take, what President wil ye make, what likeness wil ye frame of his Way, by things past, or present?

Take heed of Two Wayes of Limiting God.

First, *Shut not the Lord up into any Form, or way of Working.* The Holy Ghost complains of the Jews, Psal. 78. 19. *They spake against God, they said, Can God furnish a Table in the Wildernes?* Let us take heed, that the Language of our hearts and actions be not like to this, that we say not; If we have no set Form, no Establisht way of Religion, or Civil Government, Can God in the Wildernes, and Confusion of such a Condition, continue, or encrease Truth, Holiness, Prosperity, and Peace? Thus to limit God, is to speak against him.

Secondly: *Shut not God out of any Form, or Way of working.* I speak here of the Lords Working in Love, not Wrath: and accordingly of those Forms, and Waies, out of which he hath not excluded his Love; by the contrariety between them, and his Divine, Holy Nature. Nathaniel himself had like to have stumbled at Christ by his narrow-sightedness in this kind. *Can (said he) any good come out of Nazareth?* John, 1. 46. Yet, as Chrysostom tels us, Nazareth signifies a flower, Christ out of Nazareth,

was *Flos à Flore*, a Flower out of a Flower. That form, or way which seems to thee most incapable of having any good in it may be made by God a Sweet, and flourishing flower, out of which another more glorious flower may spring, even Jesus Christ in the spiritual, Civil, and natural Image of things. This is the *first Cautiō*.

Caut. 2. Murmure not against the Lord. When Jesus Christ had sent this marke of his being come to John Baptist; That, To the poor the Gospel was preached, or as some read it, and the Greek full, as wel, bears it, The poor preach the Gospel, he ads, and blessed is he, that is not offended at me; Matt. II. 5, 6. How apt are men to murmur against, to stumble at, to reject *Jesus Christ* himself, even then, when he comes with glad tydings, with peace, and glory from the Father in the Gospel, if the way, by which he conveighes these things to them, answer not their imagination, and expectation, but be in any kind poor, obscure, and dis-esteemed. There are *two Cases*, in which we are apt to be ensnared in this kind.

First, The *Jews* had settled their expectation of the *Messiah* upon the Pompe, and Power of an outward Kingdom. He comes with his cross instead of a Throne. They therefore are offended at him, reject, and persecute him. So men generally fix the accomplishment of promises, the answer of prayers, the works of God, the administration of Christ, the operations of the Spirit in Religion, and Civil things, upon some way, that is fairest in their fancies, or understandings. If God come not to bless them, and to save them in this way, but by some other *Person*, or *Thing*, which is without comeliness in their Eye, they murmur and refuse him.

Secondly,

Secondly, When the Soldiers had our saviour in their hands, they put a Crown of Thornes upon his head, a Reed for a Scepter into his hand, a purple robe upon his back, then they mock him, and spit in his Face. I humbly pray, that this spirit be not powerful in us, who profess our selves Saints, and peace-makers, that we do not after the same manner, when the Lord makes any person, or way, which we have a low esteem of, to be the instrument of his power, Majesty, and love; cloath it with the most contemptuous disguises of Hypocrisie, delusion, Ambition, Licentiousness, falshood, Atheisme, and then spit in the Face of it, persecute it with al bitterness, and scorne under this Disguise.

Cant. 3. *Judg not things by the outward appearance, but by the inward principle.* Solomon saith: *Al the waies of a man are clean in his own eyes: but the Lord weigheth the spirit.* Prov. 16. 2. I have heard of a blind man, who could distinguish, and judg of al mettals or precious stones by weighing them in his hand. Thus judg alwaies, not by the beauty of the outward forme, but by the weight of the inward pinciple

It was a Starr in the Region of the Ayre above the Earth, that led the wise men to the House, where Christ was borne. So should it be the light of a principle in the spirit above the outward form, by which we should be gvided in our esteem, affections, and pursuits.

Cant. 4. *Judg every principle in the Light of the Holy Spirit.* Psal. 73. 16, 17. *Asaph* professeth that it was too painful for him to understand things in this world by their outward Appearances, until he went into the Sanctuary of God, then he understood the end, by discovering the principle, or beginning. Before this he was *Foolish, and Ignorant, as a beast*, vers. 22. The Sanctuary
was

was a Figure of our Savior in his Holy Spirit.

Agur Complaines, Prov. 30. 2, 3. That, He was more brutish; than any man; and had not the understanding of a man. He gives the reason of this, because, He had not learned Wisdom, which is the Knowledge and judgment of things in their inward principles, and he was without this wisdom for want of the Knowledge of the Holy. This expression of, the Holy, in Scripture signifies Glorified Natures in Heaven sometimes, whether Angels, or Saints, sometimes Saints on Earth, Whatever it be, the Knowledge of the Holy, is that alone, which comes by the Infusion, and Illumination of the Holy Ghost. Cant. 1, 2, 3. For the Savour of thy good Oyntments, saith the Spouse to Christ, thy name is, as an Oyntment powered forth. Therefore do the Virgins love thee. Draw us, and we wil run after thee. The spirit of Christ in the brightness, and sweetness of its light, Purity, Love, Joy, is this Oyntment powered forth. No Saviour is good to a Virgin-Spirit, but that alone of these Oyntments. Where there is a Virgin love to Jesus Christ, the Soul is drawn, to run after any excellency, only by this Savor, by the light, and sweetness of the spirit, as this Oyntment is poured forth there.

As it is in the Objects of sight, there is the Material Object; and the Formal. The Material is the thing seen, as a flower, a Picture. The Formal is the colors, by which it is seen. Besides these is the Light in the Ayre, which actuates these colors, and makes them to appear. So is it in things pertayning to the understanding, and Judgment. The outward appearance is but the Materiality of the Object, the shinings forth of the inward principle is the Formality, the Color. But the Holy Spirit is the only Light, by which the discoveries of the principles of things are drawn forth, and laid open. I have done

done now with the *Second Use*, and come to the *Third*.

Use, 2. This is for *Exhortation*. If God go forth in *New* waies, let us be *New*, that we may be fir to meet him, and go along with him. We read in the *Gospel* of the Pool of *Bethesda*. *John, 3. 2.* An Angel at certain times came down into this Pool, and troubling the waters infused a healing verture into them. Many sick persons lay round about the Pool ready to step in. There was also a House to receive the poor, diseased waiters. This House was called *Bethesda*, which signifies the *House of Free Grace*.

You who have the blackest Guilt, the deepest brand of any Lust, the darkest despair upon your Spirits, behold here a way for you to be made new this very moment. The Blood of *Christ* is before you, as a *Healing*, and *Cleansing Pool*. Your *Savior* himself is every moment descending into it from Heaven, and ascending out of it to Heaven, by the Vertue of his Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, to impart the Efficacy of al these to it, himself to take you into his bosom in the midst of these Waters, to bath you thoroughly in them till you become quite new; then to carry you up with himself into the Newness of the Spirit, of Heaven, and of the Glory of the Father. But perhaps you wil say; you are so sick, so dead in sin, that you cannot move toward this *Healing Pool*. Let not that discourage you, the Father himself is ready to take hold of you, and by his strength to put you in. He *draws* us to *Christ*. It may be you wil say, that you are under the Wrath of the Father, and therefore cannot hope, that he should give you his helping hand. To answer this, he hath built a *House of free Grace*, a *Bethesda*; he hath called this Pool of most precious Blood, the *Pool of Bethesda*, the *Pool of free Grace*. The Doors of this House

House stand continually open, day and night. All Persons are invited, and press'd to come in. All, whom the Father finds here, he himself takes, and carries in his own Arms to this Pool, and laies them in the Arms of his Son, who is alwaies descending into it, waiting in the midst of it, and rejoycing exceedingly, when any sinful, sick Soul comes thither to him. Open your Eyes, and see O ye Sons and Daughters of Men. Here, now, in this place, at this very hour, is the House of free Grace, the Healing Pool before you, if you will enter into them. Nay, even here, and now, you are already in the house of Free Grace, and in the Arms of the Father; you are in this healing Poole of your Saviors blood, you are in your Saviers Armes, he is come down to you, he is carrying you up with himself thither, where al things are New, your being, Beauty, Life, company, delights new; if only you wil beleieve, if only you wil open the Eye of your spirit to see the truth, as it is in *Jesus*. The Lord *Jesus* is set down upon the Throne of Grace, and fills the whol Earth with the Glory of his Mediation. Only the Eyes of men are held, that they see not this Glory.

Use, 4. This is my last Use, which is for *Consolation*, and Encouragement. You have now a warr with the most potent Prince in the whol Christian world, who is Cheif staff of the Papal, Anti-Christian strength. You have reason to expect a Combination of al the powers of darkness, and this world, Visible, and Invisible, within, and without, from at home, and from abroad, against you. But fear them not. This warr shal not be like other warrs, but after a new manner. It shal be with the burning of a spiritual, and divine Fire.

Take notice here for your Comfort, that this Fire shal have contrary effects upon the Saints, and upon their enemys.

First,

First, This *Fire* upon your enemys shal have these *Propertys*; It shal be; First, *Dreadful*, Secondly, *Irresistible*, Thirdly, *Devouring*, Fourthly, *Tormenting*, Fifthly, *Sodaine*.

Secondly, This *Fire* to its friends shal have these *Propertys*. It shal be: First, *Cberishing*, Secondly, *Enlightning* Thirdly, *Defensive*, as a Wal of Diamonds, Fourthly, *Heightning*, Fifthly, *Transforming* into one glorious, Heavenly, immortal nature with it self, Sixtly, *Separating* al dross from the Gold, Seventhly, *Uniting*, melting the Gold, til it al run into one undivided mass

I shal conclude this use, and my Sermon with an allusion to the story of *Eliab*, who sat upon the top of Mount *Carmel*, when the Captaines, and their fiftys in the name of the King commanded the man of God to come down. But he answered; if I be a man of God let fire come down from Heaven, and destroy you with your fiftys. *Carmel* signifies the *Vineyard of God*. This top of Mount *Carmel* is the Church in the spirit of glory, in the glorified person of Christ her head, where she is as a flourishing Vineyard to God upon the top of a Mount of spirituality. Let Kings with their Armys encompass us, if we be men of God, the seed of God, if this be Mount *Carmel*, on the top of which we stand, the cause of God, the Church, the spirit, the Mediation of Christ: then shal the Holy Angels, the spirit, Christ himself, come down, as Fire from Heaven, upon our enemys to consume them, but upon us to carry us up on high, as in the Charriot of *Eliab*, burning with the Love, and Glory of God.

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- 5 That there is much wanting in the knowledg of Gods Love, in the most able Saints.
- 6 That the Lord Christ lends dayly direction, according to the dayly need of his Servants.
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- 8 That our Union, and Communion with God in Christ, is the top of our happines in Heaven.

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fectual Work of the Word, and Spirit of Christ, for the bringing home of lost Sinners to God. In which (besides many other reasonable, and Soul-searching Truths) there is also largely shewed.

- 1 Christ hath purchased al spiritual good for H I S.
- 2 Christ puts al H I S into possession of al that good that he hath purchased.
- 3 The Soul must be fitted for Christ before it can receive him: And a powerful Ministry is the ordinary means to prepare the heart for Christ.
- 4 The work of God is free: And the day of Salvation, is while this Life last, and the Gospel continue.
- 5 God calls his Elect at any Age, but the most before old Age.
- 6 The Soul is naturally settled in a sinful security.
- 7 The heart of a Natural man is wholly unwilling to submit to the word that would sever him from his sins.
- 8 God the Father by a holy kind of violence, plucks His out of their corruptions, and draws them to believe in Christ.

The Ninth and Tenth Books of the Application of Redemption by the Effectual Work of the Word, and Spirit of Christ, for the bringing home of lost sinners to God. Besides many other reasonable, and Soul-searching Truths, there is also largely shewed.

- 1 The heart must be humble and contrite before the Lord wil dwell in it.
- 2 Stubborn, and bloody sinners may be made broken-hearted.

- 3 There shall be true fight of sin, or save the heart can be broken for it.
- 4 Application of Special sins by the Ministry, is a means to bring men to fight of, and sorrow for them.
- 5 Meditation of sin, a special means to break the heart.
- 6 The same word is profitable to some, not to another.
- 7 The Lord sometimes makes the word prevail most, when it is most opposed.
- 8 Sins unrepented of, makes way for piercing Terrors.
- 9 The Truth terrible to a guilty conscience.
- 10 Gross and scandalous sinners, God usually exerciseth with heavy breakings of hearts, before they be brought to Christ.
- 11 Sorrow for sin rightly set on, pierceth the heart of the sinner thoroughly.
- 12 They whose hearts are pierced by the word, are carried with love and respect to the Ministers of it: And are hush to enquire, and ready to submit to the mind of God.
- 13 Sinners in distress of conscience, are ignorant what they should do.
- 14 A contrite sinner sees a necessity of coming out of his sinful condition.
- 15 There is a secret hope wherewith the Lord supports the hearts of contrite sinners.
- 16 They who are truly pierced for their sins, do prize and cover deliverance from their sins.
- 17 True contrition is accompanied with confession of sin, when God calls thereunto.
- 18 The Soul that is pierced for sin, is carried with a restless dislike against it.

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8 The great things Faith can do.
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10 The Great Gospel Mystery of the Saints Comfort and Holiness, opened and applied from Christs Priestly Office.

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12 Thankfulness required in every Condition.

- 13 Grace for Grace.
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